

REMARKS

Upon entry of this response, claims 21-29, 31-62 and 71-79 remain pending in the application. No amendments to the claims are presented herein.

Applicant acknowledges the Examiner's recognition that claims 37-46, 62 and 71-79 are allowable in their present form and that claims 24 and 25 are allowable except for their dependence upon a rejected base claim. However, claims 21-23, 26-29, 31-36 and 47-61 remain rejected.

The Examiner has consented to interviewing this case, for which Applicant wishes to express his gratitude in advance. The interview is scheduled for August 10, 2004, and this also happens to be the date by which a formal response to the outstanding Office Action must be submitted in order to avoid abandonment of the application. As indicated to the Examiner by Applicant's agent during arrangements for the interview, it is the intention that the remaining prior art issues be discussed during the interview, and Applicant is holding in abeyance further substantive formal response to the outstanding rejections until the interview is concluded and its effect on the status of the issues is determined. The Examiner indicated that this course of action is acceptable.

In the meantime, Applicant maintains that claims 47-54 are patentable for the reasons of record. Applicant notes that the previous rejection of claims 21-23, 26-46 and 55-61 over the Ogi reference was withdrawn by the Examiner and replaced with a rejection of many of the same claims (21-23, 26-29, 31-36 and 55-61) over the combination of the Ogi reference with the Moriuchi reference. Thus, the new rejection notwithstanding, the Examiner has acknowledged deficiencies in the Ogi disclosure. Applicant maintains that the Moriuchi disclosure does not make up for the fundamental deficiencies in the Ogi reference and, therefore, that the combination of references is not a bar to patentability.

Subsequent to the interview, Applicant will follow up, as appropriate, with a supplemental response reflecting the outcome of the interview and addressing any issues that may remain unresolved.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be due for any reason in connection with this communication to Deposit Account No. 23-1703.

Dated: August 6, 2004

Respectfully submitted,



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